
Press Release

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***Eight Days Remain for Congress to Pass a Transportation bill
with 2.9 million jobs in jeopardy***

Los Angeles, CA – The federal legislation that determines how transportation projects are funded will expire June 30, unless Congress acts. At jeopardy are 2.9 million jobs across the nation.

In August 2005, President Bush signed the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), a bill that authorizes how surface transportation projects are funded. This legislation expired September 30, 2009. The bill has been renewed nine times, at the 2005 funding level, over the nearly three years.

Southern California leaders from across industry sectors held a press conference to urge Congress to pass legislation ensuring that revenues are available to fund vital transportation infrastructure projects for our region, and the nation's, economic prosperity. Infrastructure projects require a long term and predictable funding approach to complete the projects and achieve their goals.

The decade between 1983 and 1993 the Federal Excise Gas Tax doubled, under both Democratic and Republican Administrations, to reflect the need for both maintenance and new construction of transportation infrastructure. However, the 18.4¢ per gallon tax has not risen in nearly 20 years. Hasan Ikhata, Executive Director of the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), clearly outlined the vital importance of investing in our region by stating, "The California Transportation Commission recently projected nearly \$538 billion is needed over the next decade to repair, maintain and construct an effective, efficient and safe state transportation system, but anticipated revenues total only \$242 billion. In addition, we need to expand the current system to account for the increase in population growth and support the prosperity of the top three industries in Southern California that are transportation dependent; trade, tourism and technology".

Gary Toebben, President and CEO of the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce, added "Reauthorization of the surface transportation bill is one of the highest priorities of the business community not just in Southern California, but across the nation. We know that we will not have the recovery that we need to put people to work unless we invest in infrastructure. We have to move goods and people to grow the economy."

"During the recession, California lost nearly 1.8 million jobs, with the construction industry accounting for some of the largest job losses. Transportation funding provides revenue to support a spectrum of jobs from filling potholes to building bridges. These positions are a lifeline to anyone who has been out

of work or underemployed over the past couple of years,” stated Greg McWilliams, President, Newhall Land and Farming Company.

Randall Lewis, Executive VP, Lewis Group of Companies provided three reasons for passing a bill now, “Investing in infrastructure has an immediate and lasting impact and it will create jobs and investment. It will increase the productivity and efficiency in the region by moving goods and people. And, lastly it will enhance our global competitiveness as business looks around the world where to invest their capital.”

Art Leahy, Los Angeles Metro CEO, added, “I encourage Congress to act, without delay, to reach an agreement on the conference committee considering our next surface transportation bill. LA Metro wants Congress to move quickly to adopt a new transportation bill modeled after the U.S. Senate’s MAP-21, which incorporates the American Fast Forward initiative put forth by Metro Board Chairman and Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa which was adopted in a bipartisan manner with Oklahoma Republican James Inhofe. By working together to adopt a new surface transportation bill, Congress can get America moving again – and in the process – get millions of Americans back to work building a better future for generations to come.”

“We have \$400 million in projects in the pipeline that accounts for 11,000 jobs, but we need the federal funds to complete many of these projects and start the other projects that are approved but awaiting funding commitments,” added Rick Richmond, CEO, Alameda Corridor-East Construction Authority.

Lucy Dunn, President and CEO of the Orange County Business Council reaffirmed the business communities sentiments by stating, “Great leaders from business, government and labor are joining together with a unified voice to ask congress to please get the job done now. We need certainty in planning, infrastructure funding, reforms, and innovation that are important to a 21st century global economy with a state-of-the-art transportation system.”

Glen Becerra, President of SCAG, concluded by stating, “We urge Congress to pass a bill for the good of the country. Jobs and projects are at risk, and we are watching. On this issue, we are united.”

The press conference is available for viewing online at <http://www.scag.ca.gov/scagtv>

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About SCAG

SCAG is the nation’s largest metropolitan planning organization, representing six counties, 191 cities and more than 18 million residents. SCAG undertakes a variety of planning and policy initiatives to plan for a livable and sustainable Southern California now and in the future. For more information about SCAG’s regional efforts, please visit www.scag.ca.gov.